

SUSPENSION BILLS: MAJOR POLICY DECISIONS BY THE LEADERSHIP OF THE MAJORITY PARTY

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I came to the floor of the House this morning to talk about energy. But I just want to say a word about what was just discussed.

We have had major policy decisions in health care come to the floor of this House, not through my Subcommittee on Health in Energy and Commerce, not through the full Committee on Energy and Commerce. No. It comes directly from the Speaker's Office to the floor of the House. It comes up under suspension because who wants to vote against health? Who wants to vote against doctors?

But the reality is major changes in public policy are going on with no discussion in committee, no ability to amend or improve a bill on the floor of the House, no ability to offer an alternative before we vote because they are brought up under suspension.

This is wrong and this is indicative of the type of leadership that this House has had for the last 20 months. This is what the American people say they want changed. When they talk about change, they're talking about change from the top, and it's high time it happened.

DEMOCRATS LOOK TO JUMP-START THE BUSH ECONOMY BY PASSING SECOND ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN

(Mr. PERLMUTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, you can put lipstick on the failed Bush-McCain policies, but they are still the same old Bush-McCain policies. And those Bush-McCain policies have led our Nation into a recession. Americans need a new direction and a change.

Since taking control of Congress last year, congressional Democrats have been working to rebuild the Bush-McCain economy and help families struggling to make ends meet. We started by enacting the first increase in the Federal minimum wage in almost a decade, directly helping an estimated 5.3 million Americans and setting a new wage floor for another 7.2 million lower wage workers. When it's fully phased in, the pay raise will place an additional \$4,400 in the paychecks of these workers. This year we extended assistance to unemployed workers who are having a difficult time finding a job in a Bush-McCain economy that is simply not producing jobs. Now we are preparing to introduce a new economic package that will invest in America and create new jobs.

Mr. Speaker, Congress cannot afford to wait to jump-start this economy. We must act this month.

□ 1030

LET'S NOT BEG OPEC

(Mr. TERRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TERRY. Yesterday, OPEC met. OPEC decided to cut production because they were frustrated that the price per barrel was nearing the \$100 per barrel price. My goodness. What a tragedy for them. Isn't it a problem for this country that we rely so heavily on foreign oil? OPEC controls the majority of oil production. Our energy policy should not have to be begging OPEC for more production.

Yesterday, our electric company that serves my district announced they're raising the rates because the train company that hauls the coal to them had to raise their rates because the price of diesel fuel has gone up so much. So the electrical rates of every consumer, every household in Omaha, is going to have double digit inflation on their electric bill.

Please, Mr. Speaker, let the madness stop. Let's do a real energy bill.

THEY PUT US IN THIS SITUATION

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, for the last 8 years, our President and Vice President the founder of Bush Oil Exploration and the former CEO of Halliburton, the world's largest oil servicing firm, have had this country focused almost exclusively on drilling for fossil fuels, the use of oil and gas to power our economy. This administration issued 40,000 permits for drilling on public land onshore, and made 300 million acres offshore available to oil and gas companies. They still have 68 million acres of proven reserves that they are not drilling on.

But what is the focus now? Let's go after that last remaining 20 percent, even though it's the most environmentally sensitive, even though it will devastate the tourism industry and fishing industry of several states. Let's go after that. That's the answer. Forget the fact that we opposed research into solar power, cutting it by 80 percent, cutting wind power research and opposing more fuel efficient engines.

They put us in this situation, and now they want more of the same. And they're wrong.

A RESPONSIBLE ENERGY POLICY MUST INCLUDE SOLAR TAX CREDITS

(Ms. GIFFORDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GIFFORDS. There are three big problems that face America today. First, our dependence on foreign oil; second, climate change; and third,

America's innovation and the fact that we are not as competitive as this country needs to be. One of the best solutions to these three major problems is solar energy.

The investment tax credit, Mr. Speaker, the ITC, will expire at the end of the year. At home in southern Arizona and across this great Nation, free energy radiates from the sky almost every day of the year. Across my district, residents, businesses, utilities, and individuals are all working to do their part to take advantage of that sunshine. But major projects, large projects, but also small projects, will not move forward without the extension of the ITC.

Southern Arizonans are willing to do their part. We here in Congress have to do ours by working across party lines and working in the Senate to ensure that the ITC is extended. This is critical for our country, for our competitiveness, for climate change, and for ending our dependency on foreign oil.

I urge my colleagues to work together to pass the ITC.

HOUSE DEMOCRATS CONTINUE TO SUPPORT BILLS THAT PROVIDE AMERICANS RELIEF AT THE PUMP

(Mr. STUPAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, back in 2003, congressional Republicans supported the Bush-Cheney energy bill that was written in secret by Big Oil. And, boy, are we paying.

Three years later, we have record prices for consumers and record profits for the oil companies. Since taking control of Congress last year, Democrats have worked hard to reverse these failed energy policies.

For the first time in 32 years, we increased the fuel efficiency standards for vehicles so they will be more efficient, which will save Americans about \$1,000 a year. We also made a historic commitment to investing in biofuels and increasing domestic oil supply and drill responsibly.

This is a good start, but more needs to be done. That's why House Democrats brought eight pieces of legislation up in July to cut the high cost of gas, and Republicans opposed every one of those bills.

Mr. Speaker, it's time for House Republicans to work with us Democrats to provide the American people lower costs at the pump and lower costs in the grocery store by ending the excessive Wall Street speculation in our energy markets and increasing our energy and food costs. Mr. Speaker, it's time to end the manipulation of prices by Wall Street and the excessive speculation, to lower prices and save this American economy.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 35 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1220

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SALAZAR) at 12 o'clock and 20 minutes p.m.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3667, MISSISQUOI AND TROUT RIVERS WILD AND SCENIC RIVER STUDY ACT OF 2008

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1419 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1419

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3667) to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate a segment of the Missisquoi and Trout Rivers in the State of Vermont for study for potential addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources now printed in the bill pursuant to Part II of House Report 110-668. That committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived except those arising under clause 10 of rule XXI. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to that committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amend-

ment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. During consideration in the House of H.R. 3667 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

SEC. 3. House Resolution 1399 is laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Vermont is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Washington, my friend, Mr. HASTINGS. All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend remarks on House Resolution 1419.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Vermont?

There was no objection.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H. Res. 1419 provides for the consideration of H.R. 3667, the Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Study Act of 2008, under a structured rule. The rule provides 1 hour of general debate controlled by the Committee on Natural Resources, makes in order three amendments printed in the Rules Committee report, and provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman RAHALL and Representative GRIJALVA, Ranking Members YOUNG and BISHOP for helping to bring this bill to the floor today. And I would like to thank the staff of the Natural Resources Committee for their very hard work on a bill that is of great importance to my State of Vermont.

The Missisquoi and Trout Rivers are two of the most beautiful rivers in the most beautiful State in the Nation, and that, with all due respect to the man from Washington, I claim to be the State of Vermont. These rivers are bordered by the largest and perhaps the highest quality silver maple floodplain forest remaining in our State of Vermont. They are also home to diverse animal life, including brook trout, rare freshwater mussels, and spiny soft shell turtles. It's a favorite walking, hiking, fishing area for many people in northern Vermont and, indeed, from Upstate New York and all around Vermont.

Additionally, the Missisquoi River is part of this extraordinary 740-mile northern forest canoe trail, which is

home to some of the best flat-water canoeing in Vermont and in the Northeast. Both of these rivers are highly valued by the surrounding towns and the communities. It has great recreational areas, swimming pools, and boating. Vermont parents that grew up swimming in these rivers take their kids back there, and it's a place in Vermont of just extraordinary scenic and natural beauty.

The bill, as these study bills all do, provides for a study of the two rivers, and it represents a first step toward protecting Abenaki Indian archeological sites along the flood plains, protecting scenic waterfalls and gorges, and a way of life that has been in these communities surrounding the two rivers for generations.

Passage of the rule will allow the Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic River Study Act to be considered on the floor by the full body, and I urge support of this rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, my colleague has spoken at length about the reasons—though not as long as I thought he would, let's put it that way—why he believes these stretches of the river in Vermont to be studied for the designation as Wild and Scenic, and it's very clear that he strongly believes in this bill to enact this study. He obviously has a great deal of love for his State when he challenges all of the other 49 States as not being as beautiful, at least indirectly, as Vermont. And I would just point out to him that in my State we have so much geographic diversity as far as beauty is concerned, from one area of the State where we have more rainfall than anyplace in a country—I'm not talking about Seattle; I'm talking about the Olympic Peninsula—to the area where I live, which is a desert area that has in some areas where I live less than 7 inches of rain. So I invite my friend any time he wants to come out to see what real beauty is in a short period of time, and he may want to ask me up there and I might respond to that.

But having said all of that, Mr. Speaker, I believe it's fair to say that the American people, frankly, are far less concerned about the rivers in Vermont and are far more concerned about the high price of gasoline and the fact that Congress is not acting right now on real solutions to lower energy costs.

The House of Representatives will spend over 2½ hours today discussing rivers in Vermont but not 1 minute,